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The Self-Defeating Attitudes of America's "Reactionaries"

OUR recent editorial entitled "The Great Lie," called attention to the irresponsibility and flagrant disregard of truth and fairness characteristic of Senator McCarthy and John T. Flynn. These men would not be able to do the harm they do if there were not a very important body of opinion in this country which can only be called "reactionary."

Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. has made the helpful distinction between reactionaries and conservatives. The conservative in every society makes an essential contribution. He is concerned about the public interest but he is more aware of the new problems that any change will bring than the liberal or radical reformer. He admits the necessity of change and seeks to discover methods which will have fewer evil by-products and raise fewer new problems than the less cautious advocate of change. Yet, the conservative needs to be pushed by those who are more deeply impressed by the known evils of the *status quo*. Often those who do the pushing have been the victims of these evils which the conservative may find the more tolerable and requiring less haste because they are not a part of his own experience.

The reactionary, on the other hand, is one who struggles to the bitter end to save the *status quo*. He is driven by narrow interests and he usually is so fearful of change that he is hysterical in his judgment about forces in his society which threaten the familiar landmarks of his society to which his own sense of security is tied.

The difference between the reactionary and the conservative may be seen by comparing the Chicago *Tribune* with the New York *Herald Tribune*. These papers are supposed to be connected with the same political party but they belong to two moral worlds that could hardly be farther apart. The Chicago *Tribune* mind is the greatest menace in America today and its presence is what gives the McCarthys and the Flyns their opportunity. The *Herald Tribune* is always fair and discriminating. It never confuses the twentieth century with the nineteenth and its conservatism is always constructive.

Today the reactionary spirit leads to policies

which are self-defeating. The reactionary has the habit of hitting wildly to give expression to his fears and frustrations. He bitterly opposes the changes that have come in the American economy since 1933 and he has a convenient capacity to forget what immediately preceded the Roosevelt era. He is governed by hatred of Roosevelt and he seeks to discredit all reforms that have taken place by associating them with socialism and then with communism. He is blind to the fact that these reforms have made American capitalism durable to most Americans. This American experiment with the "welfare state" has been our American way of moving toward the solution of the problems of modern industrial society with a minimum resort to collectivism. The reactionary who seeks to destroy this experiment (in contrast to the conservative who seeks to improve some of the conditions on which it proceeds) will not save capitalism; rather, if he is successful in regard to his immediate goals, he will create social convulsions which will destroy capitalism.

The reactionary is fearful of communism to the point of hysteria but he is so blinded by his obsessions that he cannot see that democratic socialism in Europe is the bitterest foe of communism and the most successful antidote to communism. Everything that he does to encourage his own type of reactionary spirit in Europe will help to develop conditions which give communism its opportunity.

In the case of Asia his hitting becomes even wilder. He proves to have no understanding of the reason for the success of communism in China. He is wide of the mark when he blames scapegoats in the State Department. He is unable to recognize the truth that communism has ridden into power in China on the back of a social revolution that was long over-due and that the failure of the Nationalist Government to come to terms in a creative way with this social revolution lost it the confidence of the Chinese people. To keep pressing the United States Government to prop up that discredited regime is to insure the development of the worst type

of communism in China. It is to drive China into the arms of Russia and to give most encouragement to every influence in China that seeks to build up the idea that America is a reactionary and imperialist power. It is ironical that our own reactionaries are doing what the Kremlin probably wants them to do.

In general this reactionary tendency is self-defeating in its emphasis upon repressive methods of dealing with communism in this country. Putting a few communists behind bars or even deporting them will create martyrs but it will not make our institutions more secure against the communist idea. Concentration on these methods always seems to take attention away from the constructive measures which can undercut communism. It is necessary to protect the government against activities that are really subversive, just as it was desirable to defeat communism in the labor movement which is more vulnerable to communist penetration than most American institutions. The red hunt in schools and colleges will do more to create cynicism in the young about Ameri-

can democracy than to shield them against communist teaching. The stand of the faculty of the University of California in uniting behind those who refused to take a special anti-communist oath will do more to convince those who need convincing that there is health in American life than any number of legal victories over communists.

This reactionary spirit has already found embodiment in Protestant circles and there is a ceaseless effort to scare those who are in spirit conservative rather than reactionary in order to enlist them in this reactionary cause. Dr. Niebuhr's article, "Has the Church Any Authority?" showed the nature of this influence, and the extent to which it is inconsistent with a real consensus of thought in the modern church. It is here that the distinction between conservatives and reactionaries is most helpful. The church should include conservatives and various types of liberals and radicals. But churches should be communities in which the reactionary will come to feel that he is out of place.—J. C. B.

Secularism in Church and Synagogue

WILL HERBERG

SECULARISM, in D. R. Davies' concise definition, is "believing and behaving as though man were an end in himself, as though humanity existed in its own right and for the sole purpose of its own power and glory." As such, it reflects the perennial effort of sinful man to establish himself in his self-sufficiency against God. But in the past two centuries, secularism has been not merely an underground tendency constantly pressing for expression: it has become, so to speak, the official voice of our culture. Reinforced by the apparently unlimited possibilities of a wonder-working technology at the command of man, the secularist spirit has saturated the very atmosphere in which we of the western world live and breathe; it has become, in the most literal sense, the cultural climate of our time.

I

It would indeed be remarkable if the religious institutions of our society remained totally unaffected by this spirit. As a matter of fact, it has penetrated deeply into church and synagogue. Both are modern American institutions and both bear the mark of their time.

Whatever else may be the case, it is surely the task of church and synagogue, if they are to remain true to the Biblical faith that gave them birth, to open all life to the command and judgment of God.

But as they function today, they only too often provide a quiet haven to which self-satisfied souls may retire in the assurance that their security will not be troubled by unseasonable clamor. I know a man, a former labor leader, now in public service, who some years ago joined a synagogue because he felt it to be the social obligation of his position. His law partner, a New Englander, joined a church at about the same time and for the same reason. What is noteworthy in this incident is not so much the motive that impelled the two men to join as the fact that they have both remained quite comfortable in their new affiliation: neither in the church nor in the synagogue has anything happened to challenge their self-sufficiency or to shake the self-enclosed secularism of their lives. They have found nothing inside to clash with the outlook and values brought in from the outside.

That is precisely the heart of the secularism of the church and synagogue: conformity to the world, accommodation to alien standards which it is their proper function to challenge. Religion is thought of as something that can be used to serve other ends—to give individuals the "self-fulfillment" and "peace of mind" they crave, to sustain democracy, to authenticate our culture, to vindicate social and class prejudices, to conserve the values and institutions to which we happen to be attached. The church and

synagogue are thus emptied of their authentic content and stuffed with the values of the world. Men are not challenged in their self-sufficiencies and everyday idolatries, but are confirmed in them.

"Religious" secularism takes two forms, one direct and the other inverted. In the one case, the church or synagogue is turned into a kind of glorified social and adult-education center, where everything from ping-pong to prayer-meetings are offered in a kind of indiscriminate levelling-out in which nothing is central and everything peripheral. In the other, the church or synagogue becomes a carefully sheltered private "spiritual" domain in which legalism or moralism or pietism is cultivated and from which the rude affairs of the world are excluded. In both cases, there is no sense of religion as *total* obedience to God in the *totality* of existence. Most of life is withdrawn from the command and judgment of God and allowed to operate upon its own autonomous—that is, idolatrous—basis. Secularism, indeed, always ends up as practical atheism, or perhaps more accurately, as practical polytheism, with each area of life subject to its own god.

The pervasive secularism of church and synagogue may be detected on all levels. Into their institutional life they eagerly introduce the aggressive, pushing methods and standards of big business, forgetting that while they may be institutions, they are not simply such but something more. Emotionalism and aesthetic indulgence take the place of worship; an "inspiring" lecture or an "educational" book review does service for the preaching of the word of God; and an amateurish dabbling in psychology becomes the up-to-date substitute for pastoral care. As for theology, it is either abandoned altogether as "dogmatic" and "obscuratist," or else it is "reinterpreted" in accord with the latest fashion in philosophy. Vague, platitudinous pronouncements on distant affairs create an air of courageous prophetic witness, but leave the men and women in the pews at ease with their own idolatries. Perhaps the most subtle form of the secular spirit is the ready identification of religion with concern for the church and synagogue as institutions. I know of a distinguished rabbi who upbraided a young man for wasting his time reading and talking about theology when he could have been employed so much more profitably on one of his synagogue committees. And I am sure his like can be found without much difficulty in any Christian denomination in this country.

Everywhere the pattern of "religious" secularism is the same: adaptation of word and witness to the ideas, values and standards of the secular world. Success of church and synagogue is measured by the same criteria as are applied to a business house or fraternal order. The ideas that pervade church and synagogue are the ideas dominant in the outside world. And the values that are cherished in church

and synagogue are the standard values of bourgeois society. If religion is that through which man is confronted by God in his word and is challenged to decision, if religion is that through which the believer is strengthened in grace for hearing and obeying the word of God in total obedience, then it is hard to see in what way the contemporary church and synagogue are to be regarded as authentically religious institutions.

II

So much is common to both church and synagogue in America today. But for the Jews, secularism presents special problems and special difficulties that find little counterpart in Protestant Christianity. Jewish existence, unlike Christian, is not unequivocally religious. Being a Christian, especially for Protestants, is ultimately a matter of religious status. But being a Jew is normatively *both* "ethnic" *and* religious. In the Jewish scheme of things, what corresponds to the church as *ecclesia* is not the synagogue but the People Israel, and the People Israel, though essentially a covenant-folk, exists in the world in various quasi-national, quasi-ethnic embodiments, seemingly quite remote from religion. This ambiguity makes it possible for Jews to affirm themselves as *Jews* in purely secular terms. The ways in which one may be a "good Jew" without religious commitment are many. Zionist nationalism has until recently been the most popular. Devotion to Hebrew or Yiddish culture is another. Involvement in "anti-defamation" or "defense" activities serves the same end. Even philanthropy, especially if it is somehow linked with the State of Israel, becomes a way of "being Jewish." It may indeed be said that there is virtually no interest or activity in the life of the American Jew that cannot somehow be turned to this purpose.

The situation that results is not easy to analyze or evaluate. Many Jews have their children learn modern Hebrew or Yiddish in the conviction that they are thus giving them a "Jewish education," notwithstanding the fact that the education the children are getting may be entirely secular. Interest in "Jewish" art, literature and music becomes a recognized form of Jewishness. Such enterprises as Reconstructionism, largely secular in aims and objectives, acquire the status of religious movements. Most revealing, however, is the case of the Jewish labor movement in this country, which flourished in the first third of the century. Here was a militantly and self-consciously secular group, openly hostile to Jewish religion in all its forms, which nevertheless passionately affirmed itself as Jewish.

There is nothing quite comparable to this among Christians in America, although something faintly resembling it may be detected in the fusion of religion and culture characteristic of certain European countries. It creates for Judaism a problem the like

of which does not confront the Christian community. In order to be a "good Jew"—how equivocal is the term!—the contemporary American Jew need not affirm the Biblical-Rabbinic faith; he can be a fervent Zionist, an ardent Hebraist or Yiddishist, or a valiant fighter against anti-Semitism. Thus, corresponding psychologically to the Christian affirmation of the non-Jew, there is, for the Jew, not merely Jewish religion but a whole host of *ersatz*-Jewish faiths, all moving on the secular level, all unable or unwilling to break through to the religious. In many cases, the synagogue actually becomes an adjunct to these concerns so that it loses even the minimal power it might otherwise have had to challenge the ways of the world.

The deplorable state of theology among American Jews naturally serves to increase the power of secularism. A hidden liberalism pervades and enfeebles the religious thinking of all sections of American Jewry, even the most Orthodox. Those who have contributed anything really significant to Jewish religious thinking in the past decade can almost be counted on the fingers of one hand. For the most part, what passes for theology is little more than the routine reiteration of inherited formulas, the ostentatious parading of meaningless idealistic platitudes, and the serving up again of the stale commonplaces of yesterday's humanist philosophy. One way or the other, the outcome is the same: there is no voice that seems capable of making authentic Jewish faith relevant to the problems and perplexities of our time. This debilitating atmosphere is so pervasive that it affects even those who sincerely believe themselves free from it. They too—rabbis, scholars and theologians—make their interpretations and judgments, do their thinking, in wholly secular terms. And there is no Niebuhr or Tillich to "shake the foundations."

III

But neither in the church nor in the synagogue is the movement all one way. There are growing signs of a reaction against the pervasive secularism of the past century. If secularism—believing and behaving as though man were sufficient unto himself—is the mark of the modern mind, I think we can say that there is already beginning to emerge a mind that is post-modern.

It is not hard to see why this should be so. "Suffering," Silone says, "has carved out new dimensions in our souls, of which we were unaware in 1919"—and these dimensions are undeniably religious. Secularism is the product of material and spiritual security: "Jeshurun waxed fat, and kicked: . . . then he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation" (Deut. 32:15). But our security is shattered, our material security despite unprecedented productivity and our spiritual security despite the flattering assurances of

the humanist gospel. We—modern men—are at the end of our rope; we are in a plight from which no machine can save us. Ultimate problems have quite unaccountably become immediate problems. And so some of us at least are beginning to remember the God which made us and to esteem rather more highly the Rock of our salvation. This may be called a "failure of nerve," but it is well to remember that it is "nerve"—in the American sense: presumptuous self-assurance—which is so largely responsible for the disastrous plight in which we find ourselves.

The return from secular self-sufficiency is manifested in various ways, and of course it is having its effects upon church and synagogue. The most important, so far as the church is concerned, would seem to be a partial liberation from entanglement in class and cultural prejudices, permitting a much clearer prophetic witness, and the revitalization of theology along more Biblical lines. In a sense, something of the same nature is beginning to take place in the synagogue. But perhaps as important is the new thinking going on in Jewish intellectual circles today, largely outside the sphere of the synagogue though not unfriendly to it. Much of this thinking seems to be pervaded with a deep religious concern, with a genuine anxiety to find a saving faith, a total existential commitment in terms of which one's life may be related significantly to ultimate reality. Unless the official synagogue proves utterly insensitive to this ferment, there is every probability that these newly awakening elements of American Jewry—and there may be more of them than we suspect, especially among the younger people—will ultimately find their place within it. And it is hardly likely that this "return" will be without effect, even institutionally.

Those very factors which so complicate the problem of secularism for American Jewry may yet, paradoxically enough, come to serve as points of departure in the overcoming of secularism. Most of the *ersatz*-Jewish faiths I have mentioned, once their total claims are rejected, may well become ways to authentic religious affirmation. Even the bare impulse to group survival cannot be denied some measure of value, since in the Jewish scheme of things the mere existence of the People Israel is of religious significance. Even Zionist nationalism may conceivably serve as a vehicle of genuine religious commitment, as the examples of Martin Buber and the late Judah L. Magnes testify. If there are many roads leading away from authentic Jewish faith, there are also many ways leading back to it.

However we may welcome the present-day retreat from secularism, let us not here above all lose our sense of criticism and judgment. Secularism arose as an expression of man's revolt against God, but it has also had its witness. In part at least, it voiced a moral protest against the intolerance, the inhumanity, the otherworldly unconcern with social evil, that

have corrupted so much of religion to this day. "Everything God has made has its purpose," a distinguished Hasidic rabbi once said. "And how about unbelief? That too has its purpose. When anyone appeals to you for help, act as though God were not there and you alone were left for the man to depend upon." If the overcoming of secularism in church and synagogue is to be of authentic religious significance, whatever has proved valid in secularism must be taken over into Judaism and Christianity.

Europe's Forgotten "Average Refugee"

STEWART W. HERMAN

UP to and including the first years of the 20th century, the perennial European refugee was a relatively free man with a fairly free choice: either to *settle down* quietly on his own merits wherever he found temporary asylum (usually just over the border!), or—with a pack on his back—to *take passage* across the seas. Many areas of both Europe and America have been richly endowed with "refugees" who, finding themselves deprived of their old homes, set out on their own initiative to "resettle."

Unhappily, the first World War brought changes in this haphazard migration of people no matter where they turned. Regulations multiplied an hundredfold and formal passports—hitherto virtually unknown—came into general use. At the same time it became necessary to establish a Nansen "nationality" for many—mostly White Russian—who no longer had a country. The second World War has not improved matters. On the contrary, it may be said today that *personal choice no longer plays a decisive role in the movement of refugees.*

Questions of competitive labor, social security benefits, unemployment insurance, to say nothing of political reliability, national security, foreign policy, racial prejudice and quotas—all of these and many others must be answered before the gates are opened. This is an important fact. For one thing, it has some bearing upon our modern interest in "human rights." The fact that the average refugee today believes himself to be nothing more than a minor pawn in the great game of power politics is deplorable.

It applies not only to "repatriation" into countries behind the Iron Curtain but to "emigration" into the bosom of Western Democracy. What he—as a human being with certain basic rights—may prefer to do with his life is far less important than what the governments (from which he comes, where he now is, and to which he is trying to go) wish to do with it.

Only international agreements on the very highest level seem to be able to break the log-jam of national

interests and set in motion a jealously controlled flow of people. That is a major part of the reason why the DPs are moving while the far more numerous Volksdeutsche, for example, are standing still. The International Refugee Organization was established purposefully to rescue and reestablish the victims' friends who were stranded, for the most part, in former enemy territory. But IRO itself has not an easy time finding new openings for the victims of war.

Thousands of Displaced Persons are moving to Australia and the United States, and hundreds more to various South American countries and elsewhere. All in all, *IRO is now doing its work well.* The biggest remaining problem is the "hard-to-move" DPs, (the aged, ill and the highly-qualified), many of whom will be left where they are when IRO shuts up shop early in 1951.

But the privileged DP, in whose behalf a great international organization has been negotiating agreements and footing all bills, is not the "average refugee." Most of Europe's refugees today have no IRO status. Only a few of the cleverest or luckiest among the "ineligibles" have moved into France or Britain or overseas, and the resultant reduction in the total number is imperceptible.

A vast and undigested lump of unwanted foreigners sits heavily in Western Germany's queasy stomach. At the present rate of progress a whole generation of homeless people—numbering millions of human beings—will probably die out long before their children can have a reasonable feeling of being "settled."

Moreover, thousands more are crossing into Western Germany every week, and many more would come from the red "satellite" states into Austria if the walls were not so high. Time itself cures many ills; it is possible that the passing of a generation or two might solve this problem peaceably too. The question is: *Can so much inflammable material be exposed to so many angry political sparks for so many years?*

The most decisive action that has ever been taken with regard to the non-IRO refugees in the last five years is the one which—by a stroke of the pen *under the Potsdam Agreement*—deprived them of their homes. This document not only gave sanction to the evacuation of ethnic German minorities in various Eastern European States but undoubtedly led to the expulsion of whole German populations from what was merely intended to be Polish-occupied territory but has been, in fact, Polish-annexed.

One of the most telling arguments for mass emigration from Germany might be the desirability of trying to get rid of some of the embittered "firebrands" whose heated voices will not be silent as long as provinces like Silesia and Pomerania are severed from Germany's body. Even if East Prussia should be regarded as irretrievably lost to the Rus-

sians, the loss of cities such as Breslau and Stettin to the Poles will never be accepted. Indeed, responsible Germans in the Western Zones are already publicly pressing for a *German-Polish border revision* and it would not be surprising if the Russians one day used these provinces as a major bargaining point in drawing all of Germany into the Eastern orbit.

Meanwhile—since the Potsdam decision—little or nothing has been done to promote either emigration overseas or resettlement of refugees in Europe. Even in Western Europe there is considerable room for the absorption of additional people, especially in France where an uneconomic agricultural situation effectually blocks establishment of foreign farmers on unused land.

There is still plenty of room in many parts of the United States, not to speak of Canada and Australia. Of course, South America—particularly Brazil—could take all the refugees of Europe almost without noticing their arrival, but the big problem is—*money!* or rather, money with imagination!

All of these countries have been taking a certain number of DPs and some have even championed the Volksdeutsche, but the fact must be faced that all the prospects for emigration in the next ten years will not perceptibly lighten the German load and therefore Germany will continue to be an economic liability.

Let's admit it. The day has passed when the hardy adventurer can climb down into the hold of an immigrant ship, reach a new shore (without passport), take to a covered wagon and soon set up a log cabin over a bubbling spring in a clearing. Even if today's Europeans could stand the gaff, for which country could they aim?

The world may still be primitive in many places, but governments are sophisticated and bureaucratic. They have endless rules and regulations. Selfish nationalism has reared its ugly head. Descendants of old pioneers do not readily grant the same rights to the "have-nots" of today. Large capital outlays are necessary for the purchase of land and the provision of adequate resources to survive the first hard years. But the big undeveloped countries are jealous of foreign capital which—in its turn—does not relish confiscation.

The only solution seems to be a carefully-planned international and inter-governmental action which combines the natural resources of land-rich, money-poor states with the large funds of international banks and the humanitarian concern of non-profit Christian organizations. With everybody doing his share, some impression may perhaps be made on this huge problem in the time remaining at our disposal.

It is unthinkable and undesirable that all Europe's refugees should be moved overseas. Above all, the draining off of Europe's best manpower must be carefully avoided. But if we assume that—to release various pressures—an opportunity of emigration

should be given to at least one million Central Europeans (not including the surplus Dutch, Belgians, Italians, etc.) a little calculation will quickly prove the necessity of a transport and resettlement organization even larger than IRO. Think of the time and cost of shipping a million people. Think of the new areas that must be cleared, made accessible by road and rail, the houses to be built and the farms to be stocked!

As for the refugees remaining, especially in Germany and Austria, it is high time that the same sort of money be supplied to put farmers and artisans into profitable production as soon as possible so that Europe can begin to pay its own way. A few *notable pilot projects* have been developed by the churches and now by the governments (for instance, with ECA funds in Germany). These have proved their point but at most the existence of a few hundreds of people has been re-established.

Recently the Lutheran World Federation has helped to set up a nationwide Evangelical Home Building Association in Austria which now works under the full aspices and control of the Austrian Evangelical Churches, recognized by the Austrian Government. It is prepared to put up simple, streamlined homes to be paid for by the savings, labor and rent of the refugees themselves. The pump is being primed by various international Christian relief funds, while the small contributions of the ultimate owners begin to flow in. The occupied houses will be mortgaged by the Association to provide more funds for more houses. Every detail has been painstakingly studied and it is hoped that 10,000 dwelling units, with garden, will snow-ball into completion within a couple of years!

With houses of their own erected on re-claimed land or near man-hungry industries, the refugees will then have a legitimate claim on Austrian nationality and this ugly bar to full freedom—namely, statelessness—will be removed. Undoubtedly, the refugee problem in Austria, unlike the far larger one in Germany, *can be solved* by some intelligent planning and intelligent financial assistance. Much of the German problem will have to be solved in the same pedestrian way because there is simply no other way to tackle it. Most of the refugees seem fated to stay approximately where they are—as long as national boundary lines extend into the clouds.

One of the small hopeful signs of a new day on the horizon is the decision of the United Nations to appoint a *High Commissioner for Refugees*, but as yet his jurisdiction seems to be almost as limited as that of IRO and he must depend for all except purely administrative funds (office expenses) upon the voluntary hand-outs of sympathetic Governments! His jurisdiction should be extended to include *all* refugees and his purse should be big enough to bring effective help as well as letters of consolation and regret.

The attention of our Christian public in the United States should be focussed very closely on this new office, which will come into existence next October. Public opinion, carefully expressed, will unquestionably exercise a very strong influence on the attitude which the High Commissioner takes toward the work entrusted to him. In short, he is *our* public servant.

The United Nations has taken sufficient notice of the unfinished refugee problem to appoint a full-time director of refugee matters. This was done because of public pressure. We must not let the matter rest there.

The plight of the refugees constitutes a genuine problem in drafting a better peace policy. It is not enough for us to send shiploads of food, clothing and medicine. Sooner or later these people must have decent homes, or our failure to do something about them may deprive us of ours! These refugees contain the inflammable substance of new conflicts. We must mobilize all the resources at our command in order to solve the whole "problem."

Communication:

Dear Sir:

Dr. Sherwood Eddy, and Jack Belden, say that "China Shakes the World." But I would like to shake Dr. Eddy (whom I know well and love like a brother) because he recommends only left-wing books on China.

After making China my home for the past thirty years, spending the first five in traveling over much of interior, rural China, then marrying into a family which has given a cumulative total of over 500 years of medical, educational, evangelistic and Y.M.C.A. service to China, I say . . . categorically and specifically, the Communist conquest of China has not been "a people's revolution." The masses in China are rural; they wanted war to cease—Japanese war or civil war; they wanted to be let alone to get on with their sowing, tilling and harvesting. The "revolution" was Moscow-dictated, planned twenty years ago, as anyone can read in the "Theses for Colonies and Semi-colonies" of the Sixth Congress of the Third International. . . .

Chiang Kai-shek, personally incorruptible, has persistently worked for progress and reform despite . . . overwhelming problems. His government has done more for the people of China, *including the rural masses*, than any other China ever had. This government established more and better schools, promoted mass education, established rural rehabilitation projects, like the Tangku harbor development and the Yellow River rediversion to reclaim two million acres of farm-lands, farmer's credit societies, agricultural and animal husbandry experiment stations, and short-term training programs for farmers. It ended the period of one-party tutelage, and implemented the Constitution. Chiang Kai-shek appointed 10 non-Kuomintang members to his cabinet of 24. Dr. Eddy mentions none of these, which actually took place, and cannot be called paper-plans. . . .

Those of us who know Chiang Kai-shek personally know that such assertions as the following from Belden's book are completely out-of-character and untrue: that Chiang is more Confucian than Christian, that he burns offerings to the dead, that he goes into rages, screams like a shrew, throws teacups and pounds on the table. He is not a despot; he is not an opportunist in strategy, a fumbler in government nor a fool in war. General Wedemeyer had 461 personal interviews with him in the last most difficult year of the war and says, "Few people could speak more authoritatively than I do concerning the sincerity, high moral purpose and Christian humility of China's present leader, Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek. . . . I can attest to his unselfish devotion to the Chinese people and his earnest desire to provide a democratic way of life within China." Ambassador Stuart testifies to his "courage, clear thinking and utterly unselfish devotion." Bishop Walsh said, "He is neither a dictator nor a figurehead; he is simply a determined man with a conscience, a sense of responsibility and a deep love of country."

To believe the Communist smear, channelled through left-wing books by writers who seldom had any contact with the Generalissimo, instead of checking with those who know the Christian Generalissimo personally, is unworthy of as fine a man as Sherwood Eddy.

(Mrs.) GERALDINE FITCH.
Leonia, New Jersey.

Church and State in Hungary

(*Excerpts from the speech delivered by Joseph Darvas, the noted writer, on his installation as Inspector of the Banya Synod of the Hungarian Lutheran Church. Darvas has since been elevated to be Minister of Religious Affairs and Public Education.*)

What do I regard as the decisive aspect of my future work?

In the first place, to serve, with all my abilities, the cause of good relations between the Hungarian People's Republic and the Lutheran Church. I know that there is very much to do in this respect. The relation of our church to the state has now two strong pillars: the Constitution of the Hungarian People's Republic, which guarantees the freedom of conscience and the free exercise of religion for every citizen, and the agreement between our church and the state which, among others, provides for a considerable financial support of our church. The decisive test of this relation between church and state is, of course, whether the church is permitted to pursue her specific vocation, whether she is free to fulfill her God-given mission. Is this freedom well established? Yes, it is. In the first place, it is guaranteed in the Constitution. But the past five years of the Hungarian People's Democracy have also demonstrated that there is a complete freedom of religion in this country and the churches have felt, during this period, the helping hand of the state. No words could give a stronger refutation of those hostile calumnies from abroad than the fact that hundreds and thousands of churches have been rebuilt, after the Fascist devastation, and hundreds of millions of florins have been given by the state in order to support the churches. . . .

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while guaranteeing the freedom of conscience and religion, separates the church from the state and thereby opens the road towards the free church system.

Yet, while we hold to the idea of the church that is free of politics, we do not see incompatibility in the church's recognizing, approving and helping, with her means, that great social transformation that is now taking place in this country. The acts of social justice, the results in helping the poor and oppressed which have already been achieved and will be realized in the course of an unparalleled reconstruction effort, are in the spirit of Christ. "He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth the needy out of the dunghill" (Psalm 113:7).

If we think only of what we saw in the country or even in this capital five years ago—ruins, debris and devastation,—and if we consider what we see now: we must come to this decision. We have even more reason to do so if we consider the hitherto unthinkable dimensions of that development which is envisaged in the new plans that are before us and are being realized.

Neither is it conflicting with, nay, it is the very vocation of, our church to take our part, according to our abilities, in the great peace effort of our days . . . for the whole Lutheran Church, with all her members, unanimously belongs to the peace camp which is led by the powerful Soviet Union!

Reverend Assembly! I realize that, by solving the problems which concern the organization of our church, we do not bring about a renewal. It is the spirit that must be renewed. That powerful historical change in which we too take part offers a marvellous opportunity for this. Hungarian Protestantism, and with it our own church, has the grand opportunity to become again a creative force in the life of the Hungarian people. Yet to achieve this end, one cannot take the attitude of Pietistic other worldliness, but should return to the progressive Protestant traditions. With this in view we must strengthen the ties that bind us to other Protestant churches, especially to the Reformed Church. Let us not deny that there are still certain people among us who would prefer, to a progressive Protestant unity, the camp of that "Christian unity" which, while using the slogan of Christianity, is actually inspired by the spirit of anti-democracy. Let us oppose these people, for their program, instead of bringing about the victory of Christian ideas, would rather bring back the anti-Protestant, anti-progressive and anti-democratic rule of new Caraffas. This is not our road! Our road is the renewal of our church as a people's church and our marching together with our people, ever forward and upward. Our church has already made the first steps on this road and nothing can pull her back! It is by marching on this road that I want to serve with all my work. I ask your confidence and your help.

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Yet with telling this, we must also recognize that there were forces, in our church also, which refused to follow this path and would have preferred to bind our church to the reactionary grievance-politics of Cardinal Mindszenty. They appealed to the Scripture, to the confessions and interests of our church, yet these words were used as a camouflage in defending the old order of society. I think there is no need now of explaining the real meaning of the Mindszenty-politics. A reaction of the darkest dye and the cruel cynicism of an oppressive class rule that hid behind its facade have been fully disclosed. Yet we cannot regard Mindszentyism as a finished affair. . . . And what would happen if Mindszentyism, in some new shape, would gain the upper hand in the leadership of our church? It is therefore our high duty and responsibility to repel, defending the true interests of our church, the recurrence of this temptation in the life of our church! . . .

Our opinion is that the church should not take part in politics, neither is she to have political power. We are, therefore, in agreement with the Constitution which,

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